



Standards of Practice: School Health Services



**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AGENCY OF EDUCATION**

Standards of Practice: School Health Services

Summary:

The Vermont *Standards of Practice: School Health Services* manual, (the Manual) addresses Vermont school health services that support public pre-K-12 education. The information in this manual is designed to provide guidance to school administrators, school nurses, and others, towards the development, implementation and evaluation of school health services.

As of 2014, the Manual undergoes a continuous process of revision overseen by the School Nurse Advisory Committee under the auspices of Vermont Department of Health (VDH) and in partnership with the Agency of Education (AOE). Health services, including health appraisal and counseling, communicable disease control, mental health, and emergency and first aid care, shall be made available in a confidential manner to students in each school. These health services shall be delivered in accordance with the school district's written policies and procedures, which shall be developed in collaboration with parents and community health resources (EQS, 2014). Ideally, this is done using the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child framework (CDC, ASCD 2014: <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/wsc/index.htm>). The school nurse uses the standards of practice described in this manual to guide school nursing practice, the writing of policy procedures, and the delivery of Vermont school health services.

History:

School nurses in Vermont have worked to define the functions of school nursing and school health services since 1944. The first written document was distributed in 1972 to all schools. A School Nurse Evaluation Committee was established in 1984 under the auspices of the Vermont [then] Department of Education (DOE). Among other things this resulted in what was called the *Vermont School Health Services Standards of Practice Manual*. Revisions to the Manual have continued from 2002, 2005, and 2010, 2015.

In June, 2009, the Commissioners of the VDH and then DOE signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding school health services in Vermont. The MOU states the joint effort "seeks to link, and to optimize the efficiency of, and the efforts of the VDH and DOE in providing school health services". In 2014 the process of continuously updating the manual continues to be a coordinated effort between the now Agency of Education (AOE) and the VDH. (See Revised [MOU, 2015](#)).

Process:

Recommendations to the Commissioner of VDH and Secretary of Education are made by the School Nurse Advisory Committee (SNAC). The SNAC consists of four public school nurses, the VDH, State School Nurse Consultant, the Vermont State School Nurses' Association President, the Division Director of the Maternal and Child Health division of the Health Department, as well as a representative of the AOE and the VDH Child Health Prevention Coordinator. The ultimate approval of this content is done by the Commissioner and Secretary of these agencies.

Content of the Manual is scheduled for revision by the SNAC. Drafts and revisions go through several expert hands starting with the SNAC, and as needed by medical, and content specialists

including leadership from Vermont chapters of the American Academy of Pediatrics, and of the American Academy of Family Physicians. The SNAC may request input from partners at, an institution of higher education, the Vermont State Board of Nursing, the Vermont Medical Society, the Vermont State School Nurses' Association, the Vermont Principals' Association, the Vermont Superintendents Association, and the Vermont School Boards Association. Final content is reviewed by VDH and AOE leadership. Approved revisions are posted and maintained on the VDH website: www.healthvermont.gov. Stakeholders will receive electronic notification of the updates.

Organization of this manual:

Each section contains a statement of purpose, authorization, legal references (where applicable), and resources. Sections contain web links, describes the school nurse's role, and when available web links to Vermont or national resources. Reference and resource materials are chosen from legal statutes and evidence based literature from professional and peer reviewed sources. Each section contains the most recent review date. Sections may be downloaded, but not altered in any way without written consent of the VDH and AOE, however there may be certain, identified downloadable templates labeled for adaptation to your setting.

Web links: Due to the availability of evidence based resources, some may require membership, usually free, for access. While every effort has been made to use the latest, correct web link to resources, you may find web links that are no longer active. When this occurs it is appreciated if you would notify the VDH, State School Nurse Consultant (contact information below). This anticipated as resources update their content or web structure over time.

Comments, corrections, and recommendations: All such statements are appreciated and will be reviewed by the State School Nurse Consultant and shared with the School Nurse Advisory Committee as appropriate. Please submit comments at any time. (Contact information below)

School Nurse Advisory Committee 2014/15

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Respectfully Submitted,

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